

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 XMB-04 DODE-00
PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 /065 W
-----064402 291403Z /43
R 281121Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL EDINBURGH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1548
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS EDINBURGH 192

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, ECON, UK
SUBJECT: IS THE ENGLISH DISEASE MOVING NORTH?

SYNOPSIS: LOW PRODUCTIVITY THREATENS SCOTTISH JOBS AT THREE
DIFFERENT COMPANIES.

LOW PRODUCTIVITY IS CURRENTLY THREATENING AT LEAST 15,000
SCOTTISH JOBS AT CLYDESIDE. THIS HAS BEEN UNDERLINED BY
ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHRYSLER ABOUT THEIR LINWOOD PLANT, BRITISH
LEYLAND ABOUT THEIR FACTORIES AT BATHGATE AND GLASGOW AND NOW
BY SINGER ABOUT THEIR PLANT AT CLYDEBANK.

THE AMERICAN MANAGER OF SINGER STATED YESTERDAY THAT HIS
SCOTTISH FACTORY HAS THE LOWEST PRODUCTIVITY OF ANY OF THE
COMPANY'S MAJOR ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE REST OF THE WORLD.
HIS PLANT, WITH 3,000 EMPLOYEES HAS AN ANNUAL OUTPUT OF
440,000 HOUSEHOLD SEWINGS MACHINES WHILE SINGLE WORLDWIDE
PRODUCES 400,000 MACHINES WITH 2,000 EMPLOYEES.

THE MANAGER MR. LARRY NEELY, WAS QUOTED AS SAYING "IT IS A
SHAME THAT A COUNTRY LIKE BRITAIN, WHICH WAS IN THE FOREFRONT
OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, IS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HEAP
IN THE WORLD-WIDE PRODUCTIVITY TABLE."

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HIS STATEMENT CAME AFTER 4000 WORKERS MET YESTERDAY TO DISCUSS
SOME 2800 JOBS THREATENED AS PART OF THE COMPANY'S PROPOSED
PLAN TO SLOWLY RUN DOWN THE PLANT. THE WORKERS CALLED FOR
MORE REINVESTMENT INTO PLANT AND ACCUSED SINGER OF SUCKING AWAY ALL
THE PROFITS THEY COULD IN THE LAST 100 YEARS WITHOUT PUTTING
ANYTHING BACK.

TOMORROW SCOTTISH SHOP STEWARDS JOIN TRADE UNION OFFICIALS IN TALKS WITH BRITISH LEYLAND TO DISCUSS THEIR PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEMS. ON THE WHOLE LEYLAND HAS REACHED ONLY ABOUT 70 PER CENT OF ITS TARGET BUT THEIR PLANT AT BATHGATE HAS RECENTLY SLUMPED TO ONLY 54 PER CENT.

AMERICAN EXECUTIVES OF CHRYSLER WILL BE AT LINWOOD IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS TO REVIEW THE PLANTS PRODUCTIVITY WHICH HAS FALLEN TO 68 PER CENT OF TARGET.

COMMENT: ALL IN ALL THINGS DON'T LOOK TO BRIGHT ON THE CLYDE THESE DAYS AND IT ALL CAN'T BE BLAMED ON THE WORLD CUP.DOBBS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDUSTRY, REPORTS, PRODUCTIVITY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978EDINBU00192
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780269-0337
Format: TEL
From: EDINBURGH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780613/aaaaakvq.tel
Line Count: 75
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c355e57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2183432
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IS THE ENGLISH DISEASE MOVING NORTH? SYNOPSIS: LOW PRODUCTIVITY THREATENS SCOTTISH JOBS AT THREE DIFFERENT COMPANIES.
TAGS: ELAB, ECON, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c355e57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014